

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration is respectfully requested.

The claims are 17-26.

The above amendment presents a new set of claims wherein:

New claims 17 -21 replace previous claims 4-8, respectively.

New claims 22-26 replace previous claims 12-16, respectively.

Support for new claim 17 (which replaces previous claim 4) is evident from the disclosure of the present specification at page 6, lines 23 to 29, Table 1 on page 8 of the present specification as well as original claim 4.

Support for new claims 18-21 is the same as for new claim 17. Additionally, support for claims 17-21 will be seen from original claims 5-8, respectively.

No new matter has been introduced.

The new claims are presented to clarify the distinctions between the present claims and the cited references. Accordingly, entry is respectfully requested.

It will be noted that the new claims are in “consisting of” format to clarify that the claimed Ag base alloy contains no elements except Ag and the additive elements which are specified in each of these claims, at the purity recited.

Claims 1 and 4 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as anticipated by or, in the alternative, under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as obvious over Schatz et al. (U.S. 2,719,085).

This rejection is respectfully traversed.

The Ag base alloy of Schatz et al. is an Ag-Si alloy. In view of the above amendment, however, Si is excluded from the possible additive elements of claim 17 (which replaces claim 4). The Ag base alloy of Schatz et al. contains Si as an essential component, and is fundamentally different in this respect from the Ag base alloy of the present claims which contains no Si (or which is Si-free). It is evident therefore, that all claims are unobvious over Schatz et al.

The above comments are also applicable to the rejection in Official Action paragraph 5 on Schatz in view of ASM.

Thus, all of present claims 17-26 are unobvious from Schatz et al. alone or in view of ASM.

Further, claims 1-8 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Goldsmith (U.S. 2,310,231).

This rejection is also respectfully traversed.

The silver alloy of Goldsmith contains Na as an essential component, and is therefore unobviously different from the Ag base alloy of the present invention which contains no Na.

Although Goldsmith shows P as one of optionally additive elements (column 1, line 60), neither the objective nor the effect of the addition of P is mentioned in therein.

It is evident therefore that Goldsmith provides no hint about the problems to be solved by the present invention (the present specification, page 1, line 12 to page 2, line 7) and the means to solve these problems (the present specification, page 2, line 10 to page 3, line 34).

In view of the above, it is apparent that the rejection on Goldsmith is untenable with respect to present claims 17 and 26.

The above comments are also applicable to the rejection in Official Action paragraph 8 over Goldsmith in view ASM.

Claim 1 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Hensel (U.S. 2,450,340).

Further, claims 3, 4, 7, 9, 11, 12 and 15 have been rejected 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hensel.

These rejections are also respectfully traversed.

In view of the above amendment, claim 17 excludes Ni and Fe which are mentioned in Hensel et al. as additive metallic elements. Therefore, claim 17 (which replaces claim 4) is unobviously distinguished from the disclosure of Hensel et al.

In above claim 20, (which replaces previous claim 7), Pt and Pd which are mentioned in Hensel et al. are deleted from among the first additive metallic elements. Further, Ni and Fe which are mentioned in Hensel et al. from among the second additive metallic elements have been deleted.

Hensel et al. neither teach nor suggest an Ag base alloy of such composition as defined in claims 17 and 20 (which replace previous claims 4 and 7).

It is evident therefore that claims 17-21, as well as claims dependent thereon, are unobvious over Hensel et al.

For the foregoing reasons, it is evident that the rejections on prior are untenable and should be withdrawn.

No further issues remaining, allowance of this application is respectfully requested.

If the Examiner has any comments or proposals for expediting prosecution, please contact undersigned at the telephone number below.

The Commissioner is authorized to charge any deficiency or to credit any overpayment associated with this communication to Deposit Account No. 23-0975, with the EXCEPTION of deficiencies in fees for multiple dependent claims in new applications.

Respectfully submitted,

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